

## Investigating the Relationship between Workload-Resources and Exhaustion of Nurses and Police Officers in Namibia

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**Abstract:** A lot has been published on burnout within the service industry; however, an in-depth investigation of job stressors and burnout in both the safety and health sectors of Namibia has been left unexplored. This study investigated the relationship between job demands-resources and burnout. Burnout occurs when an individual is exposed to emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job (exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy). Job demands require continuous efforts and job resources are aspects of the organisation that are helpful in achieving goals, reducing costs of job demands and stimulating growth and development. The sample is made up of police officers (n=482) and nursing staff (n=672) from various regions within Namibia (n=1154). Results were analysed using the SPSS (version 24) to assess the relationships between the variables. The results revealed exhaustion had a relationship with the workload, resources and organisational support. Lower levels of workload, accompanied with higher levels of resources and organisation support would reduce exhaustion. The workload can be managed by making use of time-management training, improving delegation, and by ensuring the employees have mentors and supervisory support. Training opportunities improve work resources and reduce work stress. Healthy coping strategies, like being active and meditation help to alleviate stress (exhaustion). Having healthy work relations enhances organisational support and improves coping mechanisms of employees.

**Keywords:** *Job demands-resources, burnout, Namibia*

### 1. Introduction

In 1995 the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) estimated that amongst law enforcement personnel the suicide rate was almost double (22/100,000) when compared to the general population (12/100,000) (Aamodt & Stalnaker, 2001). McIntosh (2016) found that those who constitute our protective services (police, military, etc.) experience an average of 295 suicides per year, of which males (266 suicides per year) make up the majority of this statistic. According to Stanley, Hom, and Joiner (2016), job dissatisfaction, burnout, marital status (single) and subjective health complaints are positively related to suicide ideation. As far as research on nurses' general health is concerned, the nurses at public hospitals are more prone to burnout because of their job setting (Van Der Doef, Mbazzi, & Verhoeven, 2012). Mudaly and Nkosi (2015) also revealed that anxiety in the workplace causes stress which leads to burnout, resulting in a higher rate of absenteeism in the nursing profession. This clearly shows that the job setting of nurses is not the only factor that results in burnout. According to a study done by Hawton et al. (2002), the main methods used for suicide by nursing staff were self-poisoning (72 cases, 67.9%), self-injury (32 cases, 30.2%) and 1.9% have tried both methods. They also added that most of these nurses who have been interviewed were heavily dependent on depression medication; they suffered from affective disorders that were the result of certain job stressors.

According to Chung et al. (2009), it is quite common for the quality of sleep of permanent night shift nurses to decline and eventually these nurses end up developing minor and cumulative sleep deficits. This is an indication of deteriorating health, which makes nurses prone to burnout. Quality sleep is important to a nurse's healthy functioning, as sleep is important in the area of self-care, it plays a major role in carrying out one's day-to-day activities and biological processes (Zhang, Punnett, & Nannini, 2016). Zhang et al., (2016) stated that the work-family conflict is a challenge for nurses and could lead to depression, an anxious state and poor health. Furthermore, Thuynsma and de Beer (2016) found that depressive symptoms and emotional load account for some variance in burnout. Considering the work that police officers and nurses do, they are exposed to emotionally straining encounters which impact on their burnout levels. Waschgler, Ruiz-Hernández, Llor-Esteban, and Garcia-Izquierdo (2012) found that apart from the job setting and anxiety, exposure to a violent work environment negatively impacts on job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion

which results in burnout. This indicates that both the healthcare and safety/security sectors operate in an environment that exposes employees to high-risk workplace violence and this result in high levels of burnout. Stress in the workplace is usually caused by the job demands which eventually lead to sickness and psychological distress making the individual prone to burnout (Edwards & Burnard, 2003). Burnout is constant exposure to emotional and interpersonal stressors at work, and it is defined by three dimensions namely exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). According to Bezuidenhout and Cilliers (2010) burnout is explained as a calamity in the individual's relationship with their work as opposed to a crisis in the individual's relationship with people at the workplace. Job demands can be regarded as the physical, psychological and personal expectations from the job that requires continuous effort (Bingham, Boswell, & Boudreau, 2005). According to Bakker, Demerouti and Verbeke (2004) job resources are aspects of the job related to physical, psychological, social or organisational needed to achieve organisational goals. Job resources may also inhibit job demands and the stimulation of personal growth and development. Resources may include salaries, career opportunities, organisational support from employer and colleagues, performance feedback, task significance and task identity. Khamisa, Oldenburg, Peltzer and Ilie (2015) outlined that burnout has an impact on the mental health and wellbeing of employees and is most likely to compromise efficiency, performance and the quality of service they provide. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between job demands-resources and burnout experienced by the police force and nursing staff within Namibia. No study in Namibia has investigated this critical relationship nor focused on police officers and nurses or at this magnitude.

## 2. Literature Review

**Burnout:** The word 'burnout' was coined by Freudenberg (1974). It gives a description of employees' reaction to prolonged stress which is common in jobs that involve a lot of social interaction. The term 'burnout syndrome' is applied to jobs that involve taking care of others which result in the failure of resources that provide energy and an adjustment to long-lasting stress. Maslach et al. (2001) defined burnout as a response that is a result of an individual being exposed to emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, and is essentially characterised by the dimensions of an individual being tired, ineffective and distrustful. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) provide a clear and comprehensive outline of the three dimensions that are interlocked when discussing burnout. They state that the first dimension, exhaustion, measures the level of tiredness without looking to other individuals as a source. They continue with the second dimension, which is cynicism, and it is the inappropriate attitude that an individual has towards his/her work in general and not necessarily present with other people within the working environment. Lastly, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) state that professional efficacy involves both the social and non-social characteristics of the occupational requirements and the accomplishments the individual strives for. Burnout can be defined as a particular form of a work-related and long-lasting type of stress (Hamid, 2007). Hornby (2010) defines burnout as a feeling which is a result of doing something for too long and needs to rest. Maslach, Jackson and Leiter (1997) view burnout to be the opposite of engagement. Schaufeli, Taris, and Van Rhenen (2008) stated that engaged employees are energetic and are able to effectively connect with their work in addition to dealing with the demands of their job in an effective manner.

This is deemed as the opposite of those employees who suffer from burnout. The multidimensional theory of burnout is defined as an individual's experience of stress that is rooted in one's difficult social relationships, which includes the individual's notion of others and self (Maslach, 1998). It discusses three components of burnout; emotional exhaustion defined as feeling as if one is emotionally strained and one has used up all the emotional resources. This is a result of work overload and personal conflict in the work environment. Depersonalisation which occurs when one expresses detached responses to other people which develop as a result of emotional exhaustion. Lastly, reduced personal accomplishment which refers to a lowered sense of self-efficacy and feelings of one being incompetent at work, which is caused by no or little social support and a lack of opportunities to develop at work. According to Doulougeri, Georganta and Montgomery (2016, p. 1), "burnout is a well-studied syndrome in healthcare associated with various professional and personal consequences." The job demands-resources model states that burnout develops despite the type of job an individual has, as it all depends on whether the weight of job demands outweighs that of the job resources (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). They added that some jobs that are designed in a poor way with high

job demands and is responsible for physical and mental resources exhaustion of employees. This then results in energy depletion accompanied by deterioration in the health of employees. When job resources are not available, the sense of motivation is defied and this leads to cynicism and a low level of performance which is also characterised by burnout.

According to Bakker and Heuven (2006), police officers are expected to manage between their sentiments to achieve facial and physical expressions that appear to be neutral, firm, and meticulous. However, several studies have indicated that the regulation of these emotions as part of the work role may be stressful and detrimental to their health. They further emphasised that 25 years of research have proven that burnout is a complex variable and accounted for the individual stress experienced by contextualising it to the larger organisation with individuals' relations to their work. Burnout appears to be an important factor in nurses' retention and turnover rates, which badly affects their work performance and the quality of care provided (Bruce & Sangweni, 2012). According to Kop, Euwema, and Schaufeli (1999), police officers experience burnout due to the overflow of job stressors that includes negative aspects, such as staff shortages (81% of police officers), time pressure (74%), workload (71%), lack of communication (70%) and inadequate resources (78%). Operational stressors, such as violent arrests (49%), forceful measures (40%) and appearing in court (44%) were viewed as causing less occupational stress (Kop et al., 1999).

Hamid (2007) states that stress as a result of the workplace has long been acknowledged as one of the existing challenges in both the nursing and police profession. A negative relationship was found between hardy type personalities and burnout. It is suggested to strengthen the hardy personalities of individuals instead of reducing environmental stressors which could reduce the risk of burnout (Hamid, 2007). The theory of work engagement by Maslach et al. (1997) elaborates that engagement is a culmination of energy, involvement, and efficacy, and these three components are classified as the complete opposites of the burnout dimensions (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008). These theorists argue that exhaustion will change into energy, cynicism will turn into involvement and, ineffectiveness or futility will change to efficacy when employees are engaged (Bakker et al., 2008). According to Bakker et al. (2005), burnout is transmittable, and there is a possibility that it can be transmitted from one employee to another. Their study reveals that employees observe burnout in one another and in the process it is then passed on from one employee to another. The results of their study among 12 different European countries provide evidence to support the contagion theory (Bakker et al., 2005).

They also emphasised, that it then led to the notion that the nurses who reported the highest prevalence of burnout in other colleagues, were most likely to experience burnout too. Bakker et al. (2005) emphasised that this contagion may have occurred through two different ways, burnout may have been passed on unconsciously by one nurse being 'emotionally exhausted' and the other nurse could have mimicked the behaviour of the other; the second way, of course, is on the conscious route which happens when nurses socialise after work or whilst still working. They pointed out that their study clearly shows that burnout is not limited to individuals and should be a concern for organisations. Bruce and Sangweni (2012) in their study in South African academic hospitals stated that rationalisation and positioning might be the factors that impact on burnout. They emphasised that the two constructs may affect work performance and staff turnover in the hospitals. Despite the low degrees of burnout and levels of satisfaction, a number of measures should be implemented to increase retention rates and job satisfaction with regards to their physical working conditions, promotion opportunities and recognition for good work (Bruce & Sangweni, 2012).

**Job Demands-Resources:** According to Rothmann and Jordaan (2006), job demands and resources are negatively related; working with clients can be regarded as demanding and as a result employees' are unable to use their job resources effectively. Job resources refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of a job that reduce the physiological and psychological costs of job demands, stimulate growth, learning and development within the individual and are functional in achieving work-related goals (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According to Crawford, LePine and Rich (2010), job resources are characteristics included in a job that is efficient in achieving work goals, stimulate personal growth and development, thereby reducing demands and they're associated physiological and psychological costs. Job demands are essential factors with regards to a decrease in health outcomes of nurses and police officers.

Employers should ensure that there is a balance between job demands and resources (Peters, de Rijk, & Boumans, 2009). Job demands are not necessarily negative; however excessive job demands may lead to anxiety, depression or burnout (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According to Bakker and Demerouti (2007), employees may experience job strain when there is an imbalance between the job demands and the job-resources. However, Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2007) suggest that even when job demands are high, high levels of resources prevent the manifestation of burnout. Consequently, the relationship between job demands and burnout will only be predominantly strong when the job resources are reaching lower levels within the working environment.

In instances where job demands are a negative influence, Van Yperen and Hagedoorn (2003) recommends that employers allow employees more control or autonomy and social support instead of trying to reduce the job demands, affecting productivity or the services provided. Job resources foster employees to meet their goals and increase job performance. Employees may be motivated by job resources (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Job demands can be positive under the right circumstances. Demands and work efforts are usually buffered by the aspects of the job which are covered by job resources (Van Vegchel, De Jonge, & Landsbergis, 2005). Job demands do not always affect an individual especially if the job has sufficient resources. Another study carried out in Europe indicated that several job resources buffer the impact of certain job demands in relation to burnout. Bakker et al. (2005) concluded that the study provides an insight into how not only job demands and job control may be the predictors of strain but that several aspects of the job may interact with the job resources and impact burnout. Nahrgang, Morgeson and Hofmann (2011) indicated that there are many job demands and resources that exist in the work-place and it is imperative to recognise which of these job demands exhaust mental and physical resources.

Which job resources motivate the engagement levels of employees, Job demands are the essential factors in predicting fatigue with inclusion of long-term non-attendance. Whereas, job resources are the essential factors in predicting commitment or the lack of commitment and short-term absence (Bakker et al., 2005). As the JD-R theory suggests, all working environments or job characteristics can be modelled using two different categories, namely job demands and job resources. Job demands can be described as characteristics of the job that require continuous efforts that are associated with certain costs, or the outflow of resources (Bingham et al., 2005). Job resources refer to those aspects of the organisation that are helpful in achieving goals (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Although limited published research is available regarding the relationship between job demands-resources and authentic leadership, some research suggests that leadership does have an impact on the environment in which the employees operate. Certain studies suggest that when supervisors pay attention to working conditions that promote job satisfaction in an employee's environment, it can essentially improve their overall performance (Laschinger, Wong, & Grau, 2012). When managers and supervisors provide feedback and information, it encourages a sense of purpose for the employees and it enhances their abilities to make decisions that will eventually contribute to the organisation's goals.

Devonish (2013) noted that job demands might result in several issues, such as physical exhaustion and chronic diseases, anxiety and depression and absenteeism. Field and Buitendach (2014) emphasise that job demands and resources are related to work engagement. Whereas the limitation of job demands is related to negative work engagement, job resources turned out to be a great predictor of work engagement. Following to the two-factor job demands-resources theory, employees will perform their jobs as normally required without motivators but, with motivators, employees will exceed the minimum requirements at work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2016). Further research suggests that with the JD-R theory, it is possible to understand, explain, and make predictions about employee well-being and job performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2016). Performance and well-being of employees may be in/directly affected by the interaction between job demands and job resources.

**Job Demands-Resources and Burnout:** Burnout is a very serious issue among employees, especially for nurses and police officers and it greatly impacts their general health. According to Imai, Nakao, Tsuchiya, Kuroda and Katoh (2004) a wide range of occupations experience burnout which includes nurses. The one aspect they all have in common is that they work with people. Under one of the dimensions of burnout, namely depersonalisation, employees treat their clients or patients as objects or things (Goodman & Wayne

Boss, 2002). Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli (2001) found that emotional exhaustion has been related to certain job stressors (e.g., workload and role problems) and certain attitudinal and behavioural aspects (e.g., turnover intention and absenteeism). When individuals experience feelings of exhaustion or fatigue, they have most likely endured an intense workload and conflict among their colleagues. It is also possible that certain actions, such as absenteeism and turnover intention on the part of the individuals, are also due to the increased workload and job demands. According to Bingham et al. (2005), individuals experiencing high control or high demand situations often experience anxiety and emotional exhaustion. High job demands generate high levels of stress and burnout on employee well-being. Various studies across the world indicate that job demands are positively related to exhaustion and disengagement from work. Bakker et al. (2005) stated that earlier research pointed out the consequences of burnout on the individual and organisation, absenteeism, depleted emotional and physical well-being and employee turnover.

They further added that nurses who are exposed to high job demands with little resources are the likely victims of burnout. According to Van den Broeck, De Cuyper, Luyckx, and De Witte (2011), studies suggest that employees that have access to sufficient resources whilst experiencing high job demands may feel less burned out. An individual who experience a steady supply of resources and who is adequately familiar with and capable of meeting their job demands, would be efficient at work. Employees would experience work engagement when exposed to high job demands complemented by high job resources. Pienaar and Bester (2011) added that thousands of qualified nurses quit from the South African health sector annually based on various reasons, including burnout. Their research showed that demanding work circumstances could potentially influence employees to reconsider being part of the organisation. Respondents revealed that high levels of emotional exhaustion coupled with average levels of personal achievement and those respondents whose results were low on the two factors displayed a high degree of the intention to quit.

Organisational stress as a result of job demands and a clear lack of resources are the contributing factors to emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation (Pienaar & Bester, 2011). They emphasise that burnout is not primarily the result of the working environment but also the interaction between the individual's intra psychological aspects. Burnout in the long run can lead to depression (Thuynsma & de Beer, 2016). The job demands-resources model proposes that job resources encourage employee engagement through a motivational procedure and that job demands promote burnout (Crawford et al., 2010). Employers should ensure that employees possess traits that make employees less susceptible to the demands of the job, especially those that lead to tremendous levels of stress and burnout. Zito, Cortese and Colombo (2016) added that the promotion of job resources is vital as it helps buffer the impact of job demands on nurses and police officers, while minimising the state of distress they experience. Based on the literature discussed above, the following hypotheses have been developed.

**Hypothesis 1:** Workload has a positive relationship with burnout.

**Hypothesis 2:** Resources, organisational support, job security and advancement opportunities have a negative relationship with burnout.

**Hypothesis 3:** Significant differences exist regarding burnout of police and nursing employees in relation to gender, age tenure marital status, numbers of dependents, qualifications and region.

### **3. Research Methodology**

Making use of cross-sectional research design, the data was collected by making use of a self-administered questionnaire (survey research), which was distributed to hospitals and police stations. This study was conducted with 1154 participants across different regions (Oshikoto, Kavango East, Oshana, Omaheke, Khomas and Erongo) within Namibia, employing a convenience sampling technique. The total population were estimated at 7286 of a police officer and 2405 nurses in the selected regions. As part of a research project, research assistants were assigned to these different regions to collect the data. The regions were allocated based on where the research assistants live. After permission was obtained from the Permanent Secretary of Health and Social Services and hospital matrons, the Ministry of Safety and Security, Lieutenant



General of the Namibian Police force and station commanders, through the use of convenience sampling employees were approached to participate in the study. Employees were informed of their right to confidentiality and anonymity. A total number of 1300 questionnaires were distributed and 1154 completed questionnaires were returned (89.1% response rate). Descriptive statistics were calculated to describe the distribution of the data in terms of means and standard deviations. Participants were in no way harmed and questionnaires are stored for the next three years. Most of the participants were females (68.2%), between the ages of 24-28 (22.4%), had worked between 3-4 years (21.9%), single (59.7%), had between 1-2 dependants (36.0%), had obtained grade 12 (36.7%) and were from the Khomas region (24.5%). The rest of the biographical details are displayed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Sample (n=1154)**

<b>Item:</b>	<b>Category:</b>	<b>Frequency:</b>	<b>Percentage:</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	359	31.1
	Female	787	68.2
	Missing values	8	0.7
<b>Age</b>	Below 24	153	13.3
	24-28	258	22.4
	29-31	178	15.4
	32-35	169	14.6
	36-40	114	9.9
	41-45	92	8.0
	46-50	75	6.5
	51 and older	106	9.2
	Missing values	9	0.8
	Less than 1 year	73	6.3
<b>Tenure</b>	1-2	188	16.3
	3-4	253	21.9
	5-6	145	12.6
	7-8	109	9.4
	9-10	85	7.4
	11-15	69	6.0
	16 and more	224	19.4
	Missing values	8	0.7
	Single	689	59.7
	Married	391	33.9
<b>Marital status</b>	Divorced	28	2.4
	Widowed	37	3.2
	Missing values	9	0.8
	None	288	25.0
	1-2	415	36.0
<b>Number of Dependants</b>	3-4	251	21.8
	5-6	111	9.6
	7-9	41	3.6
	10 and more	40	3.5
	Missing values	8	0.7
	Grade 12	424	36.7
	Certificate	272	23.6
	Diploma	236	20.5
	Degree	89	7.7
	Honours Degree	95	8.2
<b>Qualification</b>	Master's Degree	7	0.6
	PhD	2	0.2
	Missing values	29	2.5

<b>Region</b>	Oshikoto	263	22.8
	Kavango East	152	13.2
	Oshana	209	18.1
	Omaheke	97	8.4
	Khomas	283	24.5
	Erongo	150	13.0
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>1154</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Measuring Instruments:** A biographical questionnaire was used to determine the participant's gender, age, tenure, marital status, numbers of dependants, highest qualification obtained and region of origin. Job demands-resources were measured using the Job Demands-Resources Scale (JD-RS) by Jackson and Rothmann (2005). This scale comprises of 46 items which make use of a 4-point response scale (1-never, 2-sometimes, 3-often and 4-always). The items represent different domains such as workload ("Do you have too much work to do?"), resources ("Does your job offer you opportunities for personal growth and development"), organisational support ("Can you count on your colleagues when you come across difficulties in your work?"), job security ("Do you need to be more secure that you will keep your current job in the next year?"), and advancement opportunities ("Does your job give you the opportunity to be promoted?"). The following Cronbach alphas have been reported (workload- .76; resources- .86; organisational support- .92; job security- .89; and advancement opportunities- .83) (Rothmann, Mostert, & Strydom, 2006). Burnout was measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory, developed by Maslach et al. (1997).

**Statistical Analysis:** The data analysis was conducted using SPSS Version 24.0 (SPSS, 2016). Cronbach alphas ( $\alpha$ ) were calculated to determine the reliability of the instruments. The Pearson product-moment correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between the variables. Non-parametric statistics were completed to assess significant differences within the sample, making use of the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis tests.

#### 4. Results

**Descriptive Statistics and Correlations:** The means (M), standard deviation (SD), Cronbach's alpha and correlations were analysed and reported in Table 2 below. A mean of 23.01 was reported for the workload (average), 22.06 for resources (average), 62.49 for organisational support (average), 8.86 for job security (average), 11.63 for advancement opportunities (low) and 12.40 for exhaustion (average). A standard deviation of 4.55 was reported for workload, 4.74 for resources, 10.83 for organisational support, 2.74 for job security, 4.84 for advancement opportunities and 9.20 for exhaustion.

**Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, Cronbach Alpha and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation**

Items	Mean	SD	A	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>1.JD-R_WL</b>	23.01	4.55	.77	-					
<b>2.JD-R_R</b>	22.06	4.74	.74	.09*	-				
<b>3.JD-R_OS</b>	62.49	10.83	.88	-.01	.55++	-			
<b>4.JD-R_JS</b>	8.86	2.74	.80	.04	.23*	.26*	-		
<b>5.JD-R_AO</b>	11.63	4.84	.87	-.12*	.30*+	.29*	.15*	-	
<b>6.BO_EXH</b>	12.40	9.20	.86	.41*+	-.10*	-.17*	.01	-.07*	-

\* Statistically significant:  $p \leq 0,05$  (small effect)

+ Practically significant correlation (medium effect):  $0,30 \leq r \leq 0,49$

++ Practically significant correlation (large effect):  $r > 0,50$

### JD-R – Job Demands-Resources

JD-R\_WL = Job demands-resources (Workload)

JD-R\_R = Job demands-resources (Resources)

JD-R\_OS = Job demands-resources (Organisational Support)

JD-R\_AO = Job demands-resources (Advancement opportunities)

### BO – Burnout: BO\_EXH = Burnout (Exhaustion)

Cronbach alphas were recorded for workload of .77, .74 for resources, .88 for organisational support, .80 for job security, .87 for advancement opportunities and .86 for exhaustion. Cynicism and professional efficacy did not meet the expected reliability of .70 and were excluded from further analysis in this study.

The study found significant relationships between job demands-resources and exhaustion. Making use of Pearson product-moment correlation, it was reported that workload had a positive relationship with resources ( $r = .09$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). Workload and organisational support reported a negative relationship ( $r = -.01$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). Workload was established to have a positive relationship with job security ( $r = .04$ ,  $p < 0,05$ , small effect). Workload has a negative relationship with advancement opportunities ( $r = -.12$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). Workload was found to have a positive relationship with exhaustion ( $r = .41$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; medium effect). Resources were found to have a positive relationship with organisational support ( $r = .55$ ,  $p > 0,05$ ; large effect). Resources were found to have a positive relationship with job security ( $r = .23$   $p < 0,05$ ; small effect).

Resources were reported to have a positive relationship with advancement opportunities ( $r = .30$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; medium effect). Resources reported a negative relationship with exhaustion ( $r = -.10$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). Organisational support was found to have a positive relationship with job security ( $r = .26$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). Organisational support reported to have a positive relationship with advancement opportunities ( $r = .29$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). Organisational support and exhaustion were found to have a negative relationship ( $r = -.17$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). Job security was also found to report a positive relationship with advancement opportunities ( $r = .15$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). Job security and exhaustion had a positive relationship ( $r = .01$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). Advancement opportunities was established to have a negative relationship with exhaustion ( $r = -.07$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ; small effect). No significant differences were found between gender and exhaustion (sig 0.275). Burnout (exhaustion) is similar across the categories of gender (Male- $M=12.86$  and female-  $M=12.23$ ). The results reported no significant differences between the different age groups and how they experience burnout (exhaustion). The results of the age groups were; below 24 years ( $M=560.79$ ), 24 to 28 years ( $M=534.06$ ), 29 to 31 years ( $M=615.32$ ), 32 to 35 years ( $M=576.02$ ), 36 to 40 years ( $M=572.97$ ), 41 to 45 years ( $M=560.12$ ), 46 to 50 years ( $M=543.68$ ), and 51 and older ( $M=538.33$ ). The results showed no significant differences across the different age groups (sig 0.349). The Kruskal-Wallis test reported no significant mean differences for the years worked between less than 1 year ( $M=557.52$ ), 1-2 years ( $M=567.76$ ), 3-4 years ( $M=580.69$ ), 5-6 years ( $M=487.67$ ), 7-8 years ( $M=554.43$ ), 9-10 years ( $M=638.64$ ), 11-15 years ( $M=575.29$ ), and 16 and more years ( $M=566.46$ ).

The result indicated that there was no significant difference between tenure and the exhaustion experienced (sig. 0.066). This study indicated that there were no significant differences found between marital status and exhaustion. The mean differences reported by the Kruskal-Wallis test are represented as follows: being single ( $M=559.47$ ), married ( $M=563.02$ ), divorced ( $M=603.17$ ), and widowed ( $M=614.34$ ). Significance was recorded at sig 0.706. The test found no significant difference between the number of dependents a participant has and perceived exhaustion levels. The mean differences were recorded for the number of children each respondent had no children ( $M=558.11$ ), 1-2 children ( $M=573.31$ ), 3-4 children ( $M=573.07$ ), 5-6 children ( $M=561.84$ ), 7-9 children ( $M=503.65$ ) and 10 or more children ( $M=521.67$ ). The level of significance was recorded at sig 0.746. The Kruskal-Wallis test found significant differences amongst the participants' highest qualification obtained and burnout (exhaustion). The mean scores were as follows: grade 12 ( $M=493.78$ ), a certificate ( $M=535.20$ ), a diploma ( $M=630.97$ ), a degree ( $M=720.28$ ), an honours degree ( $M=519.11$ ), a Master's degree ( $M=657.57$ ), and a PhD ( $M=571.50$ ). Significance was recorded at sig. 0.000. A significant difference was recorded for the region of employment and burnout (exhaustion) of the sample (sig. 0.000). The mean scores were: The



Oshikoto region (M=478.71), Kavango East region (M=794.74), Oshana region (M=501.52), Omaheke region (M=652.19), Khomas region (M=555.82) and the Erongo region (M=547.89).

**Discussion:** This study aimed to investigate the relationship between job demands-resources and burnout of the police force and nursing staff in Namibia. This study also investigated if significant differences exist regarding burnout of police and nursing employees with regards to gender, age tenure marital status, numbers of dependents, qualifications and region. No study like this has been done in Namibia investigating this relationship, or with the focus on police and nursing staff and on this magnitude. Hypothesis 1: Workload has a positive relationship with burnout, was supported by this study. This indicates that when police and nursing staff have more workload requirements, they also become more exhausted (burnout). This was supported by Bakker et al. (2005), Crawford et al. (2010), Demerouti et al. (2001), and Pienaar and Bester (2011). This indicates that when nurses are expected to work longer shifts, attend to more patients and other administrative duties, they will experience a higher level of exhaustion. The higher the job demands for police officers, such as attending to more calls, the public reporting crime, attending to crime scenes, investigating crime, they would become more exhausted. Workload includes having too much work to do under time pressure, being required to attend to multiple tasks at the same time, working in emotionally upsetting situations that affect you personally and working with difficult people (arrested people and complainants). Van den Broeck et al. (2011) also indicated that when employees are expected to cope with high workloads without the needed resources, they will experience higher levels of burnout even faster. This was also indicated by the results of this study, with resources having a negative relationship with burnout (exhaustion). Resources, organisational support and advancement opportunities reported a negative relationship with burnout (exhaustion), partly supporting hypothesis 2.

On the other hand, job security reported a positive relationship with burnout (exhaustion). The results indicate that when police officers and nurses are provided with the required resources to execute their duties, they are also less likely to become exhausted even when faced with a high workload (Pienaar & Bester, 2011; Van den Broeck et al., 2011). These resources include having variety in your work, opportunities for personal growth and development, the opportunity to work independently or make use of your own judgement and being included in decision making. The organisational support that would also buffer burnout (exhaustion) include being able to rely on colleagues and supervisors for support and guidance when faced with difficult tasks, having good interpersonal relations with colleagues, being informed about your responsibilities and expectations at work, being informed about your expected and current levels of performance at work, being kept up to date with relevant information within the workplace as well as having sufficient interaction with colleagues. Advancement opportunities include being paid salaries that are sufficient and equitable for the work that you do, being paid enough for you to make a living, being allowed to attend training courses and having the opportunity to be promoted.

Should police officers and nurses be allowed access to resources, organisational support and advancement opportunities, they would be less exhausted and more likely to handle a heavier workload (Bruce & Sangweni, 2012; Crawford et al., 2010; Demerouti et al., 2001; Zito et al., 2016). According to Hamid (2007), exhaustion can be reduced by focusing on personalities of employees and how they cope with the existing challenges within their own professions. By providing employees with better coping strategies, they will be able to cope with the occupational demands and have the knowledge on how to manage job resources effectively. This will lead to productivity and lower levels of exhaustion. Van Yperen and Hagedom (2003) supported such a statement by saying that an employee, who is subjected to high job demands and has low control over certain aspects regarding their environment, will experience significant levels of exhaustion. Gender, age, tenure, marital status and number of dependents did not present significant differences with regards to burnout (exhaustion), partly rejecting Hypothesis 3. The Kruskal-Wallis test found that participants with different qualifications experienced significant differences regarding burnout (exhaustion).

Employees with a degree experienced higher levels of burnout (exhaustion). Since these employees hold higher qualifications, it would seem that more occupational pressure is placed on them to reach certain organisational goals. Having obtained a degree and working in an environment where many of their colleagues have not obtained similar qualifications, may place more expectations on employees with higher

qualifications. The imbalance between the employees with qualifications and those who did not pursue tertiary education, might also be an indication that all members might not be able to handle the expected duties which would likely be assigned to the educated employees. Certain work role requires a certain level of education and understanding. Thus, these employees with a degree may be required to take on more difficult duties but also duties that are more intellectually challenging. The Kruskal-Wallis test also revealed that the participants in the Kavango East region experienced a significantly higher level of burnout (exhaustion) when compared to the other regions in this study. When taking a closer look to better understand this significant difference, it was found that the Kavango East region experienced a high level of workload (even though they also experienced a high level of organisational support); high levels of workload affected their level of burnout (exhaustion). Based on Hypothesis 3, the biographical variables "highest level of education" and "region" indicated significant differences regarding burnout amongst the sample.

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

Baker et al., (2005) and Pienaar and Bester (2011) indicated that when employees are faced with a high workload without adequate resources or support, they are likely to become exhausted, be absent, emotionally and physically depleted and may even resign (turnover). Khamisa et al. (2015) stated that burnout can affect the mental health and well-being of both professions. This leads to lower levels of performance and the services that they provide to the public are ultimately affected in negative ways. This could be the reason why the public might view the nurses and police officers as being impersonal and incompetent. Schaufeli et al. (2008) and Crawford et al. (2010) argued that burnout is the opposite of engagement regarding their overlapping dimensions. In order to decrease burnout, the institutions should focus on increasing employees' levels of engagement by providing necessary resources and levelling the job demands that lead to exhaustion. Rothmann and Jordaan (2006), Devonish (2013) and Bakker et al. (2005) argue that job demands and resources are negatively related and that high demands could limit the utilisation of certain job resources. These theorists state that levels of job demand and resources have an impact on the level of burnout experienced by employees. According to Bakker et al. (2007) and Xanthopoulou et al. (2007), high levels of job resources prevent the manifestation of burnout. Looking at the results of this study, the institution's improvement of resources would lead to lower levels of burnout. Bakker et al. (2005), Bakker et al. (2016), and Van Vegchel et al. (2005) stated that by providing an appropriate resource the high job demands that nurses and police officers experience will be balanced. Additionally, Ojedokun and Idemudia (2014) added that in order to minimise burnout, the organisations should provide adequate training to help employees develop adaptive capacities when coping with high job demands. Considering that nursing and policing are strenuous jobs and employees are required to function optimally with limited resources, the organisations could focus on enhancing employees' coping skills and build their level of resilience (Waschglar et al., 2012). This can be achieved by looking into adequate training programmes which can help employees cope better with high job demands and low job resources. Considering that nurses and police officers may be exposed to a stressful working environment, specifically related to death, dying, illness, hopelessness, tragedy and despair, it is also recommended that these employees attend mandatory counselling to help deal with these stressors.

**Recommendations:** Pienaar and Bester (2011) also indicated that health education for nurses will also help alleviate the severity of the high workload they are exposed to. Even though nurses are in a health-conscious profession, some nurses rarely make time to do some physical exercise or meditate to reduce stress. By providing the employees with opportunities for development and growth; organisational support; skill utilisation and task variety; and performance feedback, the institution will increase the resources for the employees to not only accomplish daily tasks, but also to achieve organisational goals. To enhance job resources, management and supervisors may be required to include employees more often regarding decision-making, having representatives on work teams who make decisions which may impact all employees. Being given the opportunity to provide insight or to be asked for your views, makes employees feel more included and considered within the organisation. When employees are allowed to work more independently, it also enhances their level of competence, with the needed supervision and guidance, and these employees may even become more engaged and want to do more (Laschinger et al., 2012).

Considering that many of these police officers have not pursued tertiary education, it is also recommended that this ministry investigate the possibility of implementing short courses to alleviate the immediate need for more employees. To also reduce the immediate pressure of staff shortages, it could be considered to delegate to employees who are fast learners and excel in what they do, with necessary guidance and support (Van Yperen & Hagedoorn, 2003). Qualified nurses are encouraged to attend continuous professional development courses to ensure that their skills remain relevant and updated. It may also be prudent to consider the possibility of joint funding between employees and the ministry to further educate police officers and nurses since this will serve multiple functions. Educating these employees will enhance their level of competence and skills, being able to execute more and challenging tasks. It will also improve the quality of services provided by police officers and nurses, improving customer satisfaction and leading to an improved perception of these professions. This will also improve the employees' chances of advancement within the organisation to more senior ranks and more meaningful tasks.

When these employees are promoted within the organisation, they are also more likely to get paid better salaries that will also enhance their quality of life and the perceived fairness for work done. The provision of continued professional development through short courses is encouraged to employees that may have obtained their qualifications already. It is suggested that future studies employ a qualitative approach to delve deeper into the understanding of the workload and needed resources of police and nursing employees. Considering that the questionnaire was in English and English is not the mother tongue of most of the participants, it is recommended to also develop a burnout inventory for this population. Developing a Namibian instrument could improve the reliability of the tool and effectiveness of future studies.

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